

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2357

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

USLO SACLANT

CINCEUR

CINCLANT

USDELMC

CINCUSAFE

USDOCOSOUTH

USLO AFCE T BRUNSSUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 885

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS OCON MILI NATO DA

SUVJECT: NATO AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING

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REF: STATE 055644 DTG 061908Z MAR 76

SUMMARY: THE DANISH MOD AND THE EMBASSY WELCOME THE PROPOSED VISIT OF A BRIEFING TEAM TO DISCUSS THE BENEFITS OF AWACS TO DENMARK AND NATO. AS WASHINGTON AGENCIES ARE AWARE, HOWEVER, THE DANISH DEFENSE STAFF BELIEVES IT IS WELL BRIEFED ON THE SYSTEM AND CONTINUES TO OPPOSE IT. UNLESS THE DANISH MILITARY CAN BE CONVINCED OF ITS VALUE TO DENMARK, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN EVEN TOKEN SUPPORT FOR IT AT THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL.
END SUMMARY.

1) P.V. CHRISTIANSEN, CHIEF OF MOD'S SECOND OFFICE (PROCUREMENT, MATERIAL, PLANNING, BUDGETING AND RATIONALIZATION), RESPONDED WARMLY TO THE PROPOSED VISIT AS "PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ALL WE CAN ABOUT AWACS". AT THE CHIEF OF DEFENSE LEVEL, HOWEVER, MAAG PERCEIVES AN UNWAVERING OPPOSITION TO THE SYSTEM. THE MOD WILL HOST THE PRESENTATION FOR DANISH PERSONNEL AT DEFENSE HEADQUARTERS IN VEDBAEK WITH PARTICIPATION OF BOTH CIVILIAN AND DEFENSE STAFF PERSONNEL.

2) DEFENSE STAFF OPPOSITION TO AWACS IS BASED ON THREE JUDGEMENTS LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE: FIRST, AWACS DOES NOT MEET THE NEED OF THE THEATER COMMANDER (AIR DEFENSE, DENMARK) TO IDENTIFY THE LOW-LEVEL AIR THREAT; SECOND, THE SYSTEM MAY BE EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO ENEMY ATTACK; THIRD, IT IS EXPENSIVE AND NOT COST-EFFECTIVE.

3) CONSEQUENTLY, IN DENMARK, UNLIKE THE SITUATION WHICH APPARENTLY EXISTS IN MOST OTHER NATO CAPITALS, THE PRIMARY PROBLEM -- BOTH IN TERMS OF PRIORITY AND IMPORTANCE -- IS TO CONVINCE DANISH MILITARY LEADERS OF THE VALUE OF AWACS FOR DENMARK, FURTHERMORE, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE US MAY NOT EXPECT A SIGNIFICANT DANISH FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE AWACS PROGRAM, THE DANISH MILITARY CAN BE EXPECTED TO OPPOSE EVEN TOKEN SUPPORT BASED ON THEIR APPRAISAL OF THE PRESENT, AND FORECAST, MILITARY INVESTMENT BUDGET. IT IS ALREADY APPARENT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT F-16 PROGRAM COSTS WILL
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IMPACT DETRIMENTALLY ON OTHER PROCUREMENT PROGRAMS.

4) IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT DANISH OFFICIALS FROM THE MOD-- OR THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL IN GENERAL -- COULD BE CONVINCED TO SUPPORT AWACS OVER THE OPPOSITION -- OR EVEN WITH ONLY THE GRUDGING ACCEPTANCE -- OF THEIR OWN MILITARY AUTHORITIES. IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER ANY OFFSET WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO DENMARK SINCE LITTLE OR NO FINANCING FOR

AWACS CAN REALISTICALLY BE EXPECTED HERE. AND, EVEN IF IT WOULD BE IN PRINCIPLE, THE CONTEMPLATED 25 PERCENT OR LESS WOULD HOLD LITTLE ATTRACTION FOR THE DANES.

5) THE BRIEFERS CONSEQUENTLY SHOULD FIRST ADDRESS THE DANISH MILITARY OBJECTIONS NOTED IN PARA 2, ABOVE, IN RELATION TO DENMARK'S GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, THE SIZE OF ITS FORCE AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF AWACS TO THE SURVIVABILITY OF THAT FORCE. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE BRIEFING IN DENMARK BE SCHEDULED TOWARD THE END OF THE EUROPEAN TOUR IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE TEAM WITH EXPERIENCE IN FIELDING QUESTIONS IT WILL ALSO ENCOUNTER HERE -- IN ADDITION TO WHAT MAY BE THE SINGULAR DANISH APPRAISAL OF THE SYSTEM'S EFFECTIVENESS.
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